

## Department of Permitting & Inspections

Zoning Division  
645 Pine Street  
Burlington, VT 05401  
Telephone: (802) 865-7188  
(802) 865-7195 (FAX)  
(802) 865-7142 (TTY)

William Ward, Director  
Scott Gustin, AICP, CFM, Principal Planner  
Mary O'Neil, AICP, Principal Planner  
Ryan Morrison, Associate Planner  
Vacant, Planning Technician  
Celeste Crowley, Zoning Clerk  
Ted Miles, Zoning Specialist  
Charlene Orton, Permitting & Inspections Administrator



### MEMORANDUM

**To:** The Design Advisory Board  
**From:** Ryan Morrison, Associate Planner  
**RE:** ZP-21-732, 278 Main Street  
**Date:** November 9, 2021

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**File:** ZP-21-732  
**Location:** 278 Main Street  
**Zone:** RH **Ward:** 8E  
**Parking District:** Multimodal Mixed Use  
**Date application accepted:** October 19, 2021  
**Applicant/ Owner:** Duncan Wisniewski Architecture / Committee on Temporary Shelter  
**Request:** A new, 16-unit multifamily building addition to the existing 10-family community house.

#### Background:

- ✚ **Zoning Permit 92-030;** demolish porch and construct a new 2-story porch (side). July 1991.
- ✚ **Zoning Permit 03-057;** enclose two screened-in porches, adding stairs and modifying the parking area. August 2002.
- ✚ **Zoning Permit 05-585FC;** extend existing wood fence. May 2005.
- ✚ **Zoning Permit 15-1223CA;** replace wooden siding with fiber cement board siding. June 2015.
- ✚ **Sketch Plan 21-0963;** sketch plan review for a 16-unit multifamily building addition to the existing 10-family community house.

#### Overview:

The Committee of Temporary Housing proposes a new, 4-story building addition at the rear of the existing community house. The new addition will add 16 new multifamily units (inclusionary) to the existing community house (10 families). The proposal also includes reconfiguring the parking area, a new trash enclosure, and covered bicycle parking.

On May 11, 2021 and June 1, 2021, sketch plan reviews were held by the Design Advisory Board and Development Review Board, respectively. While no action is taken for sketch plan reviews, the applicant received feedback from both boards regarding the proposal. Neither board expressed any significant concerns.

#### Part 1: Land Division Design Standards

No land division is proposed.

## **Part 2: Site Plan Design Standards**

### **Sec. 6.2.2 Review Standards**

#### **(a) Protection of Important Natural Features:**

The property has a gentle east-west downslope. No changes are proposed that will significantly alter the topography. The street frontage is developed with the existing building and landscaping, and the proposal will occur behind the existing building.

#### **(b) Topographical Alterations:**

The parking configuration will be altered to make room for the new building. Parking will locate in two areas (with appropriate driveway access): four spaces along the east wall of the existing building (rear portion) and 5 spaces behind the proposed building addition.

#### **(c) Protection of Important Public Views:**

There are no protected views from or through this site.

#### **(d) Protection of Important Cultural Resources:**

*Burlington's architectural and cultural heritage shall be protected through sensitive and respectful redevelopment, rehabilitation, and infill. Archeological sites likely to yield information important to the city's or the region's pre-history or history shall be evaluated, documented, and avoided whenever feasible. Where the proposed development involves sites listed or eligible for listing on a state or national register of historic places, the applicant shall meet the applicable development and design standards pursuant to Sec. 5.4.8(b).*

Not applicable. While the existing building at the front of the property is listed on both the National (College and Main Street Historic District) and State Historic Registries. The proposed addition will connect to an addition on the existing historic structure. The rear roof section of that addition, currently gable, will be removed to more aptly connect the new addition at its third floor terrace connection. This particular section of the rear addition was constructed in 1991/1992 and is not considered historic.

#### **(e) Supporting the Use of Renewable Energy Resources:**

No part of the application will preclude future utilization of wind, geothermal, water or other renewable sources of energy. The applicant notes that they hope to provide roof-mounted solar PV, but it's too early to tell if that will be feasible.

#### **(f) Brownfield Sites:**

This site is not listed on the Vermont DEC list of identified Brownfields.

#### **(g) Provide for nature's events:**

*Special attention shall be accorded to stormwater runoff so that neighboring properties and/or the public stormwater drainage system are not adversely affected. All development and site disturbance shall follow applicable city and state erosion and stormwater management guidelines in accordance with the requirements of Art 5, Sec 5.5.3.*

The application will trigger the need for an Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control plan, as well as a stormwater plan, to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 26 of Burlington Code of Ordinances. Written approval from the City Stormwater program will be a requirement of the zoning permit.

*Design features which address the effects of rain, snow, and ice at building entrances, and to provisions for snow and ice removal or storage from circulation areas shall also be incorporated.*

There will be internal access to the new building addition from within the existing building. In addition, two ground level doors on the east wall of the addition will be covered by a portion of the second story. An entry at the rear will have a canopy cover as well.

There appears to be some availability to store snow onsite, particularly around the rear parking area.

**(h) Building Location and Orientation:**

The new addition is proposed to the rear of the existing building. No changes to the existing streetscape are proposed.

**(i) Vehicular Access:**

The existing access off Main Street will continue to provide access to the property. The driveway will continue along the east property line to provide vehicular access to both parking areas and the trash enclosure.

**(j) Pedestrian Access:**

Pedestrian access to the existing building will remain as existing. There is a front entrance with a direct walkway to the Main Street sidewalk. The new proposal shows a concrete walkway along the east side of the driveway to provide pedestrian access to the rear of the property. A concrete 'plaza' where the driveway passes by the east side ground floor entrances will be constructed which will aid in pedestrian safety. To access the addition's rear door (north side), a walkway will be constructed along the east and north side of the new addition.

**(k) Accessibility for the Handicapped:**

One handicap parking space will be provided per the site plan. The building inspector has jurisdiction over ADA requirements. By his direction and per Chapter 8 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances, handicap access must be addressed.

**(l) Parking and Circulation:**

Circulation within the site is clear: one driveway along the east property line to provide access to the two separate parking areas. The property is within the Multimodal Mixed-Use Parking District, which eliminates any parking requirements. The proposal includes, however, two separate parking areas for a total of 9 onsite parking spaces. As required by Sec. 8.1.16 *Transportation Management Plan*, the applicant has provided a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for review since the proposal includes more than 10 new dwelling units, and possibly more than 15,000 sf of new gross floor area. Each of the elements identified under this section will need to be addressed in the plan.

**(m) Landscaping and Fences:**

A planting plan has been submitted which includes a variety of trees, shrubs and perennials. There is a 4 ft tall (approx.) picket fence between the existing building and the west property line

(running parallel with Main Street) that will remain. Additional fencing runs along the rear half of the east property line (which will be relocated closer to the property line) as well as along the rear (north) property line. The proposal includes continuing one of the existing fences to the neighbor's fence in the northeast corner. The applicant should be aware that this permit will only allow new fencing to be permitted strictly on the subject property. If any portion of this new fencing is to occur on the neighboring property, a separate zoning permit, filed for that neighboring property, will be required.

**(n) Public Plazas and Open Space:**

The site plan identifies open space along the west side. It is assumed that this area will be open to use for tenants of the property.

**(o) Outdoor Lighting:**

*Where exterior lighting is proposed the applicant shall meet the lighting performance standards as per Sec 5.5.2.*

The application has provided lighting information which indicates compliance with the lighting standards of Sec. 5.5.2. Lighting includes recessed fixtures at the new building entrances, parking lot area lighting, and building mounted pedestrian path lighting. The plans will still need to be updated to show the locations of each light fixture.

**(p) Integrate infrastructure into the design:**

*Exterior storage areas, machinery and equipment installations, service and loading areas, utility meters and structures, mailboxes, and similar accessory structures shall utilize setbacks, plantings, enclosures and other mitigation or screening methods to minimize their auditory and visual impact on the public street and neighboring properties to the extent practicable.*

*Utility and service enclosures and screening shall be coordinated with the design of the principal building, and should be grouped in a service court away from public view. On-site utilities shall be placed underground whenever practicable. Trash and recycling bins and dumpsters shall be located, within preferably, or behind buildings, enclosed on all four (4) sides to prevent blowing trash, and screened from public view.*

*Any development involving the installation of machinery or equipment which emits heat, vapor, fumes, vibration, or noise shall minimize, insofar as practicable, any adverse impact on neighboring properties and the environment pursuant to the requirements of Article 5, Part 4 Performance Standards.*

The plans show a trash enclosure in the northeast corner of the lot, and a transformer in the northwest corner. Rooftop mechanical units are shown on the roof plan. No other references are made for utilities, mailboxes, etc. The applicant will need to revise the plans to include utilities and amenities such as electric meters, infrastructure connections (water, sewer, gas) mailboxes, etc., if proposed. If existing utilities/infrastructure will be used, please provide documentation as such. A letter from the Department of Public Works has already been obtained confirming adequate water and sewer capacity for the proposal. A state stormwater permit will be required.

## **Part 3: Architectural Design Standards**

### **Sec. 6.3.2 Review Standards**

#### **(a) Relate development to its environment:**

##### **1. *Massing, Height and Scale:***

The proposed 4-story rear addition will exceed the mass, height and scale of the existing building at the front of the property, as well as neighboring structures. However, with its location at the rear of the property, it won't be dominant along the street frontage. Neighboring buildings along this stretch of Main Street range in height from 2 to 3 stories. The scale of development is similar to nearby properties – specifically, the abutting property to the east contains a three-story multifamily building. And the property beyond that to the east contains a multifamily development as well. Given the underlying zoning (Residential High Density), the proposal fits within the intent of the zone.

Additionally, the development will utilize inclusionary housing benefits with regard to building height. The applicant's narrative states that all 16 units within the addition will meet inclusionary zoning requirements. Lot coverage can go up to 92%, and building height can reach 47 ft, as long as the requirements of Article 9 – *Inclusionary and Replacement Housing* are met.

##### **2. *Roofs and Rooflines***

The new, multi-level building addition will have flat roofs throughout. One exception to that is the elevator tower, which will have a sloped roof. In accordance with Sec. 5.2.6 (b) CDO, elevator towers and mechanical units <15 ft in height and located accordingly are permitted to exceed maximum height limitations. Buildings within the immediate area have a variety of roof types, but more specifically, the large office building on the abutting property to the west has a flat roof. The roof/roofline of the proposed building addition will not create an anomaly in the neighborhood.

##### **3. *Building Openings***

The elevation drawings show a variety of window types, with fixed, awning and casement windows throughout. With the exception of the elevator tower, there aren't any blank walls. Three first level access doors are provided (east and north side), and there will be a door on the south wall that will provide access to a portion of the second floor's rooftop.

#### **(b) Protection of Important Architectural Resources:**

Not applicable.

#### **(c) Protection of Important Public Views:**

Not applicable.

#### **(d) Provide an active and inviting street edge:**

Not applicable. No changes to the street edge are proposed. The existing building will remain as-is, and landscaping in front will remain.

#### **(e) Quality of materials:**

Siding will vary throughout the building, with brick (entry), metal vertical siding (elevator), fiber cement panels (stairs and corridors), fiber cement lap (living units), and porcelain tiles (base).

While window and doors are shown on the plans, no reference is made, nor spec sheets provided, that indicate their material. This information will be needed prior to the DRB meeting. Generally, for new construction, a variety of materials is acceptable and are encouraged to be highly durable.

**(f) Reduce energy utilization:**

The applicant notes that the new construction will be all electric, although methods for heating of domestic hot water are currently being explored, and thus no final selection has been made. The applicant should take into consideration the utilization of best available technologies and materials in order to maximum an energy efficient design.

**(g) Make advertising features complementary to the site:**

Not applicable. No signage is proposed. A separate sign permit will be required for any future signage.

**(h) Integrate infrastructure into the building design:**

The plans show rooftop mechanical units and a new ground-mounted transformer. No other reference is made to other infrastructure, mailbox location(s), etc.

**(i) Make spaces secure and safe:**

The covered entrances will be illuminated with recessed lighting. Also as the applicant notes, there will be parking area and walkway lighting installed. As usual, the new building addition will have to meet life safety requirements of the building code. Additionally, circulation to allow emergency vehicle access as well as first responder entrances with a stretcher-sized elevator will need to be addressed. Many of these items will be addressed at the Technical Review Committee, which among various departments and agencies, includes building inspector and fire marshal review.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

Approve per the following conditions and forward to the Development Review Board.

1. Update the plans to show the specific locations of all light fixtures.
2. Spec sheets for all materials: siding, windows, doors, mechanical units, roofing material, etc. shall be submitted to staff.
3. The bicycle parking structure shall meet a minimum setback of 5 ft to the side yard property line.
4. A Transportation Demand Management plan will be required, per Sec. 8.1.16 CDO.
5. A separate fence permit will be required if any portion of the fence extension is located on the abutting property, filed by that property owner.